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THE FRIDAY LETTER

Vol. 13 No. 2

Published by USDA's Food and Nutrition Service

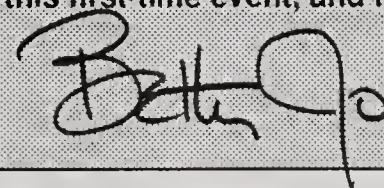
January 25, 1991

Speaking personally...

Our first all-employee meeting via teleconference is now history, and I'm happy to report that word-of-mouth so far has been positive. In this issue you'll find the answers to several questions that were asked at the teleconference which we weren't able to answer because they were technical in nature. You'll also find a copy of the proposed action plan that was announced during the teleconference. Remember--this is a draft plan, so any comments you might have would be most welcome before we finalize it.

We're busy tabulating the evaluations that have been turned in to us, and in the next issue we'll report the results. In the meantime, if you haven't turned in an evaluation yet, please do--to Larry Brantley, Director, Civil Rights Division, Room 802, POC. If you never received an evaluation form, please get one from Civil Rights Division and return it. I'm especially interested in your questions and concerns (there's a special place for them at the bottom of the evaluation form), and you can tear those off and send them to me directly in Room 803 of POC. If you include your name, you'll get a response--although it may take me a little time to get back to everyone, so please be patient!

I think the teleconference was an exciting experience, and much thanks is due to Joe Leo, Larry Brantley, Regional facilitators and coordinators, the USDA crew who produced and directed it, and of course the Work Force Diversity Task Team. We'll be evaluating teleconferences as a means of bringing us all together in the future. For the time being, thank you for your participation in this first-time event, and if you haven't given us your feedback yet, please do!



Washington Named New Deputy Administrator for SNP

Robert E. Washington, has been named the Deputy Administrator for the Special Nutrition Program. He previously served as Administrative Manager for the Census Bureau in Montgomery County Maryland. Other recent employment has included being an Assistant to the Inspector General with the national Headquarters of the Selective Service System.

Washington attended the University of California at Berkeley as a business administration major and was a member of their only NCAA championship basketball team. His master's degree in public administration was attained from Pepperdine University, Malibu, California.

Earlier in his career, Washington held senior positions with the Legal Services Corporation, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and the Office of the Lieutenant Governor of California.

Washington also served for 30 years (active/reserve) in the U.S. Army and retired from his reserve status in April 1990 as a full colonel. He served in the airborne, infantry and graduated from the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College.

Washington has two sons and a daughter. His eldest son, Jeff is currently the Deputy Director, Engineering & Development Dept., City of San Diego; a daughter Laura who is embarking on a Health Care career in Boston and a son, Brian, who is an Attorney with the firm of Latham & Watkins in Los Angeles.

And, Washington has just received the distinguished title of "Grandfather." He is the proud, new grandfather of a two-month old baby boy.



Robert E. Washington

FNS Teleconference A Success

by Wini Scheffler

Administrator **Betty Jo Nelsen** convened FNS's first-ever agency-wide teleconference on January 15 to underline the agency's commitment to the goals of cultural diversity in the work force and fair delivery of program benefits.

A convoy of tour buses reminiscent of a high school football outing ferried FNS headquarters staff to the south building auditorium where a live telecast and telephone hookup connected speakers with headquarters and regional employees.

In a videotaped conversation, Secretary **Yeutter** and Assistant Secretary **Bertini** underlined USDA's resolve to compete successfully in the changing labor market of the 90s and beyond.

Secretary **Yeutter** praised FNS for the progress it has already made in hiring women, minorities, and disabled persons, and urged that we continue to work toward a work force and services that reflect the makeup of our society, and our democratic values.

Guest speaker **Robert Lattimer**, a senior staff member of the American Institute for Managing Diversity, discussed the significance of cultural diversity in the context of a dramatic shift in the labor force.

"In the next 10 years, 85 percent of the growth of the workforce will be women, minorities, and immigrants," he said.

Mr. **Lattimer** contrasted traditional goals of assimilating individuals into a homogeneous work force to the more dynamic approach of creating an environment that encourages varied contributions.

Managing diversity through valuing differences will put FNS on the cutting edge of management for the 90s, he said: "America is competitive internationally because of diversity. We are the world."

In the afternoon, members of the FNS Work Force Diversity Task Team summarized and answered questions on the team report and recommendations. Ms. **Nelsen** outlined the proposed action plan for

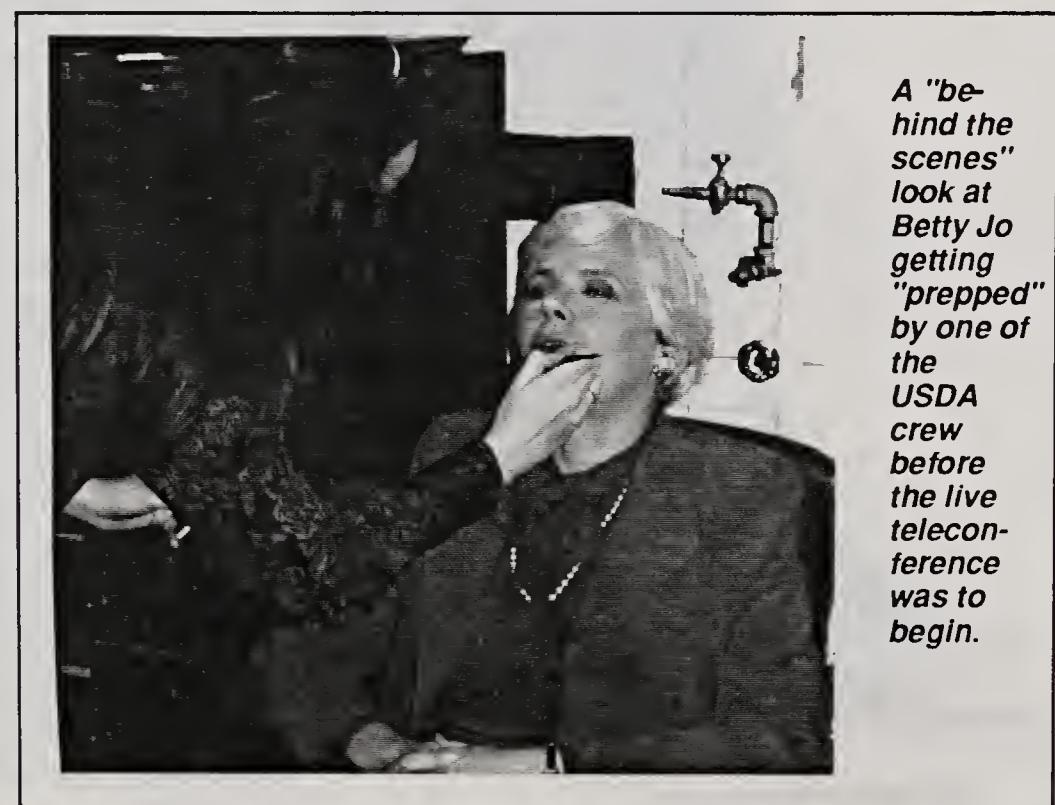
implementing the team's recommendations, and how employees could be involved in various initiatives. She emphasized that the goal of diversity is inclusive and will work to the benefit of current employees as well as those recruited in the future. She urged all employees to take seriously the agency's vision statement.

"Like me, you may remember a high school science class where you created a mix of nutrients in a petri dish culture," she said. "The next day, an amazing growth of tiny organisms filled the entire dish. My goal is an agency culture where diverse individuals can flourish and make their unique contributions."

Ms. **Nelsen** and Associate Administrator **George Braley** fielded numerous questions from headquarters and the regions on how work force diversity would affect employees and career development. The speaking and question-and-answer agenda was ably moderated by FNS Work Force Diversity Task Team Chair **Mel Fong**. Several technical questions that were deferred for a more complete answer are on the following page and the proposed action plan follows on page 4.



Yes , Larry...you can breathe a sigh of relief and smile!



A "behind the scenes" look at Betty Jo getting "prepped" by one of the USDA crew before the live teleconference was to begin.

Q&As from Work Force Diversity Teleconference

Question #1: What are the statistics on hiring, placement and advancement of individuals with disabilities for FY 1990? Is there a planned effort to increase disabled representation in FY 1991?

Answer: Statistics on hiring, placement and advancement of individuals with disabilities during FY 1990 are as follows:

-- 173 (or 8.95%) appointments were made, of which 17 (or 13.82%) were disabled, and 2 (or 6.66%) were severely disabled.

-- 314 (or 16.25%) individuals were promoted, of which; 15 (or 12.20%) reported a disability, of which; 4 (or 13.33%) were severely disabled.

To hire and retain individuals with serious targeted disabilities such as deafness, blindness, and partial paralysis is emphasized by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. The Department's goal for USDA agencies is one percent or better. FNS continues to reach this hiring goal, but we can do better.

We have initiated efforts to increase representation of people with disabilities. There is an agencywide goal to increase employment of persons with targeted disabilities from 1.55 percent to at least 2.0 percent by the end of FY 1992.

Also, FNS will distribute a survey to its managers to ascertain their needs and interest regarding the use of experienced graduate level students. Managers should also make sure that employees with disabilities are afforded opportunities for career development and advancement in line with Work Force Diversity goals.

Prepared by: Edna M. Alford
PED 756-3332

Question #2: What is the goal of recruiting all sources in FNS?

Answer: FNS is committed to identifying and eliminating all barriers to the recruitment, retention and advancement of the most qualified and competent individuals. The goal is to ensure that each vacancy is filled with the best qualified candidate without regard

to race, sex, age, ethnic background, or other non-merit factors. It is critical to meet challenges ahead that we build an environment of open and fair competition in which no individual or group is disadvantaged. This general policy is to be carried out in accordance with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and applicable collective bargaining agreements.

Prepared by: Floyd Wheeler
PED 756-3348

Question #3: What are we doing to take advantage of any "Direct Hire Authority" offered by OPM?

Answer: The Agency uses direct hire authority in recruiting. For example, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has given agencies direct hire authority for clerical and secretarial positions, computer specialist/programmer, accountant, nurse, mathematical statistician positions in the Washington, D.C., area and some regional locations at certain grade levels. The Agency will soon have delegated authority to use the direct hire authority for Food Program Specialist, GS-120-9 thru 15 positions. This authority may be used only when a shortage condition exists and a determination has been made that other methods of recruitment will not be as effective. Also, the Agency currently has delegated examining authority for Food Program Specialist, GS-0120-9 thru 12 positions nationwide. This authority enables the Agency to conduct competitive examinations for these positions which were previously filled externally from the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) lists of eligibles. This is a separate staffing process from the internal merit promotion system. The Agency can recruit and competitively examine in-house and nonstatus applicants for these positions.

Further, under the new pay law, there are various interim and ongoing authorities to provide immediate help to agencies in recruiting.

Prepared by: Jeri Barnes
PED, 756-3332

Question #4: What programs exist to help employees transfer from one Region to another?

Answer: There is no specific program to help employees transfer from one region to another, however, since July 1990, all non-bargaining unit vacancies are required to be distributed to each region and Headquarters. (Bargaining unit vacancies must fall under the provisions of the local contract). This allows all FNS employees the opportunity to apply for vacancies for which they qualify.

The skyrocketing costs of moving expenses is a major factor holding down intro agency reassignments involving moves during the last 10 years. However, during Fiscal Year 1990, there were 28 employees who transferred within FNS. In addition, limited funds have been made available in the FY 91 FPA allocations that could be used toward cost associated with the relocation of employees.

Prepared by: Peter Shepard
PED 756-3332



Mel Fong contemplating his role.

Proposed Work Force Diversity/Career Development Action Plan

Below is the action plan developed to implement the Agency's Work Force Diversity initiative. As noted during the teleconference, this action plan incorporates the Work Force Diversity **and** Career Development initiatives, reaches all parts of the Agency and all types of employees, offers opportunities to a significant portion of the workforce, and makes FNS a more attractive environment for a culturally diverse workforce. Please review the action plan, and, if you have any comments or concerns, feel free to address them to **Ted Bell**, Director, Personnel Division, Room 614, Park Office Center, or **Larry Brantley**, Director, Civil Rights Division, Room 802, Park Office Center.

- Provide training to top management team on managing cultural change and diversity
 - Establish volunteer work groups in each organization, to facilitate organizational changes necessary to build an environment in which employees can reach their full potential
 - Provide entry-level orientation and training
 - Provide training to all supervisors in human resource, program management, and career development planning
 - Provide career planning and development training for non-supervisory personnel
 - Provide secretarial/clerical training
 - Provide Mid-Management Development training
 - Increase efforts to hire summer interns and cooperative students
 - Develop a pilot program for mentoring students at the junior and senior high school level
 - Develop a pilot program for mentoring FNS employees
 - Develop an exit interview feedback system
 - Revisit and resolve the issue of revising the 120 Food Program Specialist series
 - Communicate with State agencies about the FNS cultural diversity initiative
- Implementation of the Department's generic performance standard on Equal Opportunity/Civil Rights for all employees, subject to supplemental performance indicators developed by FNS. Implementation for bargaining unit employees will be negotiated as appropriate.



Lynda Silva and Kilolo Bingham

FNS Honors Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

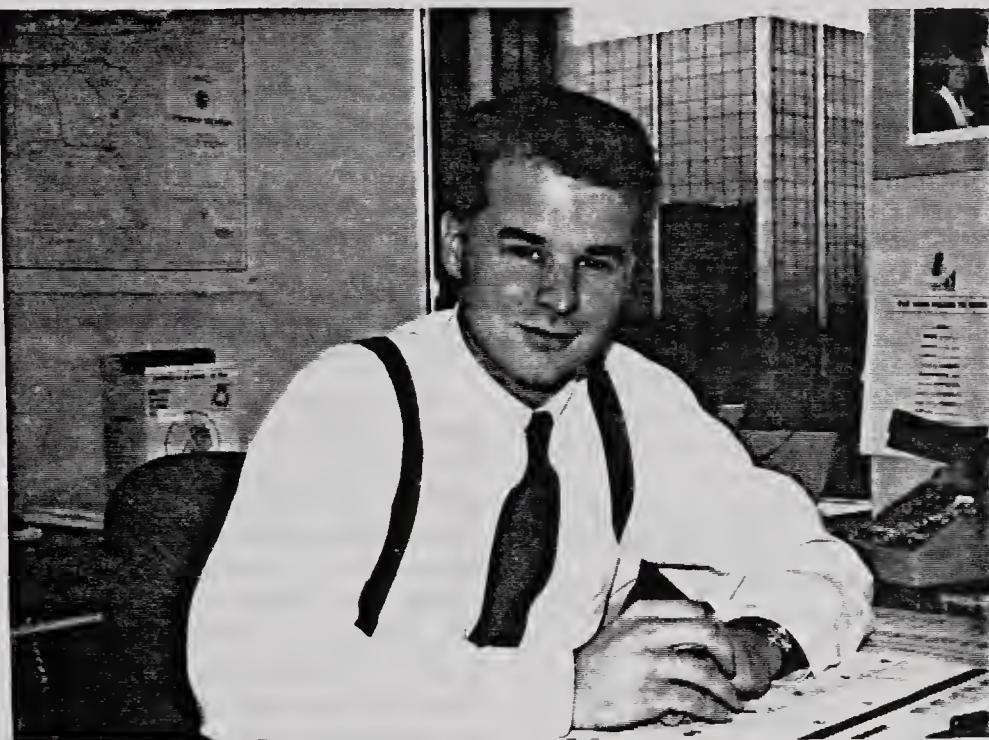


Betty Jo, George Braley, and Dr. Toppin pose with FNS's Black Emphasis Program Planning Committee. In the back row from (l) to (r) George Braley, Dr. Toppin, Debbie Whitford, Maxine McMillan, Darlene Bryant, Floyd Miles, II (Chair). Front row from (l) to (r) Twanda Rodgers, Brenda Bryant, Mariam Heyward, Sheila Little, Gwen Greene, Phyllis Twyman, Betty Jo Nelsen.

The celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday here at FNS was a success. Dr. Edgar Allan Toppin was the keynote speaker and spoke very eloquently on the life and legacy of Dr. King. The Black Emphasis Program Planning Committee would like to thank each and everyone of you that came out to help celebrate this great American Hero.

Please note that the FNS Black History Month festivities begin here at FNS on February 6, 1991 and our keynote speaker will be Dr. Calvin W. Rolark, President of the United Black Fund. On February 13, 1991 there will be a Black Filmfest and to close our celebration here will be our annual International Potluck Luncheon on February 27, 1991.

FNS Welcomes Scott Stangeland...



Scott Stangeland is the new Confidential Assistant to the Administrator, replacing Jeff Held. Scott is from Waterville, Iowa. He is a graduate of Iowa State University, where he majored in History. Scott's hobbies include softball (could possibly be a secret weapon for Bertini's Bombers), old cars and political memorabilia. Scott's wife Mary is a Marriott Dietitian at the Alexandria Hospital.

...and says good bye to Jeff Held

Jeff Held has that "I'm outa here" look as he posed for a picture at his going away party. Jeff is headed back to college. You may remember some of Jeff's other "poses" in previous Friday Letter issues. Good luck Jeff!



James Everett Douglas Retires

James Everett Douglas elected to retire on January 4, 1991, after 32 years with the Federal Government. He began his Government career as an Agricultural Commodity Grader with Grain Division.

In August 1971, Jim joined Food and Nutrition Service as an Employee Development Specialist on the staff of the Employee Development, Health, Safety, and Awards Branch, Personnel Division. Jim made a tremendous impact on FNS' supervisory training program. Former Regional Administrator **Martin Garber** was so impressed with the training that he wrote the Director of Personnel concerning the excellent job Jim did in presenting the course and getting all the employees to participate. **Charles M. Ernst**, Former Western Regional Administrator, also acknowledged Jim's excellent job in training.

Jim participated on the Commission's Interagency Training Fellowship Program and received recognition for his creativity and management knowledge in helping to develop a comprehensive management simulation exercise for a new managers course package. The recognitions of Jim's excellent performance in training are too numerous to mention.

Unafraid of change, in 1986 Jim made the switch to a Position Classification Specialist, where he performed these duties until voluntary retirement.

Jim and his lovely wife, **Nancy**, have been married for over 30 years. They are the proud parents of their industrious son, **Craig**.



EMPLOYEE PROFILE...

Anorther 1,000 Points of Light SWRO's Judy Glaze

by Blanche Jackson, SWRO

Since moving to the Dallas/Fort Worth area and joining the SWRO staff in January 1987, **Judy Glaze** has been "involved." She was one of the first SWRO employees to become a part of the region's adopt-a-school project and, in fact, coordinated that effort during the 1989-90 school year.

When her church took responsibility in February 1989 for providing the evening meal one night each month at the Arlington Night Shelter (an organization which provides food, shelter and social services to the homeless), **Judy** quickly became a member of that team.

Judy added another commitment to her already crowded calendar in May 1989 when she became a volunteer with St. Joseph's Community Hospice. In this regard, she attends terminally ill patients in their homes, sitting with them so that family members are allowed a reprieve to get away for a while. And, as if these were not enough activities, **Judy** has also served since January 1990 with the Volunteer Guardians of Tarrant Company. This organization provides court-appointed guardians to people who are incapable of looking after themselves; i.e., the elderly and the physically or mentally disabled. **Judy's** service in this program is to assist an attorney in her guardianship of an elderly woman. **Judy** says that, in practical terms, this means that she shops and runs errands each week for the woman.

This past June, **Judy** extended her service far beyond Texas when, as a part of a ten-member team with Missionary World Service and Evangelism, she spent two weeks in Mexico assisting with various construction projects at the mission center for the Mazahuan Indians.

Judy's genuine willingness to help others is evident in her day-to-day interaction with coworkers and colleagues with whom she comes in contact. She has earned an enviable reputation for quietly and efficiently accomplishing not only her assigned duties as a food program specialist in the Food Distribution Program, but also the extra projects in which she becomes involved.

She is a hard worker, but she also is generous in her appreciation of the work of others. For instance, at the end of the 1989-90 school year, **Judy** undertook a special recognition service for all the people who had contributed to the region's adopt-a-school project. Having coordinated the project for the year, she was well aware of the time and effort that employees had committed to this project. And she saw to it that each volunteer was recognized and thanked for his tutoring or other service.

Just recently, **Judy's** service was also recognized when SWRO management presented its honorary "Order of the Palm" award to her. This award has as its motto the Latin phrase, "Palmam qui moruit ferat," or "Let the one who has earned the palm (or honor) wear it." In speaking of **Judy** as the award's recipient, her supervisor, **Betty Veasley**, said, "**Judy** is one of those people who graciously volunteers to take on whatever task needs to be done--no matter how great or how small it may be. She is a caring and generous person." Acting SWRO Regional Administrator **Mike Montgomery** reenforced this sentiment when he presented the award to her. He said, "Certainly, **Judy** has earned this honor; she is a valued member of the SWRO team. She exemplifies the very essence of the President's 1,000 Points of Light initiative."

AROUND THE COUNTRY...

Mountain Plains Develops QC D-Base Log System

by Joanne Widner, MPRO

A Mountain Plains team has developed a computer system that allows food stamp and field office staff to decrease repetitive QC data input time, narrow the margin for human error, and increase the versatility of QC reports it generates. The system was developed by **Dean Duncan, Charlie Closs and Pamela Blattner**. It enables them to download a QC subsample of active cases from the National Computer Center into a database program. That program then can be accessed by Regional and field staff without rekeying data. It also allows Regional food stamp staff to create a dozen different reports from the same data. Coming online in October 1989, the system has had a full fiscal year of operation now, allowing some comparison with earlier efforts.

Prior to development of the QC Database Log System, MPRO used a SuperCalc spreadsheet that could be run to see all available data. Now, if only one part of the data is needed, a report can be tailored to print just that portion, streamlining accessibility and saving staff time and headaches.

Blattner expects the system to work in both directions and indicates that in another month or two, MPRO will also be able to upload data into the National Computer Center. She says the Mountain Plains system seems to offer improved accuracy, greater flexibility of results, and more efficient use of human resources.

AROUND THE COUNTRY (cont.)...

Iowa Launches Pilot Child Care Project

by Joanne Widner

Iowa was one of the two states chosen to participate in a pilot project making child care available in private, for-profit day care centers. The project's intent is to reduce the cost of child care for needy families. It began October 1, 1990, and will run for 2 years.

Initially, Iowa sent a notice about the project to 439 for-profit child care centers and preschools identified by the Iowa Department of Human Services. In September, recordkeeping workshops were held for 22 centers expressing an interest; seven of those centers submitted applications. Six have since been approved, and another application is pending. The biggest qualification problem for the centers seems to be meeting the 25-percent eligibility criteria.

During the first month of operation, the five centers enrolled with approximately 175 children, served 658 breakfasts, 3,672 lunches, 104 suppers and 7,501 supplements.

FROM THE PROGRAM...

Special Nutrition

--In response to FNS's November 27, 1990 decision that sales agency agreements cannot be used in NSLP school after February 1, 1991, Pizza Hut has decided to reformulate its pepperoni pizza so that it will not be subject to Federal meat inspection and thus can be sold to NSLP schools as a vended product. pending resolution of issues surround the sale and service of its regular meat-topped pizzas in the NSLP schools, Pizza Hut will offer a pizza that is exempt from inspection under the Food Safety and Inspection Service's de minimis policy for meat food products, i.e. containing less than 2% cooked meat or 3% raw meat. Pizza Hut has advised FSIS of this interim marketing change. Domino's Pizza also has plans to offer similar reformulated meat-topped pizzas to NSLP schools.

--On January 15, Ann Chadwick gave a speech on school lunch for Public Voice's conference on Children and Nutrition. She had the opportunity to address positively the concerns this audience of 250 advocacy groups and nutritionists has expressed about the school lunch program.



Deputy Administrator, FSP, Phyllis Gault met with Colorado State food stamp official Denise Anthony and State Director Mark Tansberg (right) who aired their concerns about several issues affecting clients. Ms. Gault also visited SWRO and attended an APWA Regional meeting in Phoenix in December. Photo by Craig Forman.

FROM THE HEALTH UNIT...

The following is a list of our Wellness Programs scheduled so far for 1991. Please drop by the Health Unit, Room 218, to sign up, or call 756-6000:

--Blood testing, blood pressure, body fat analysis, will be January 31, 8:00 a.m., 4th floor conference room.

--Stress Management, Dynamic Speaker--Dr. Ann Ladd, February 5, 9:00 a.m., 4th floor conference room.

--Blood Drive, February 20 and 21, 4th floor conference room.

--PMS and other health related topics for women, March 7, 2:00 p.m., 6th floor training room.

--Health Risk Analysis Movie, Self Help Books, Questionnaire for Health Appraisal, March 13, 10:00 a.m., 4th floor conference room.

--Sports Medicine Doctor to speak on Fitness, March 19, 10:00 a.m. 4th floor conference room.

--Second Annual Health Fair, Mammogram Van and more, April 3, 8:00 a.m., 4th floor conference room.

--Coping with Allergies, April 17, 10:00 a.m., 4th floor conference room.

Other:

-Future classes on CPR, Aerobics

--REMINDER...there is an AIDS Video in the Health Unit. You may take it home to view or view here at POC.

--May is Fitness Month--look for flyers, or check Health Unit Bulletin Board.

--If you are interested in a STOP SMOKING PROGRAM, call Nurse Perkey.

--If you are interested in a SPECIAL PROGRAM, please call Nurse Perkey.

Friday Letter Vacancy Listing by Vacancy Number

JOB TITLE	AREA OF CONSID.	SERIES	GRADE	CLOSING DATE	VACANCY NUMBER	OFFICE LOCATION
Regional Administrator	(A)	ES-0120		01/28/91	91-09	SWRO
Financial Manager	(G)	GM-0505	14	01/31/91	91-21*	WRO
Secretary Typing	(A-LCA)	GS-0318	3/4/5	01/28/91	91-15**	PAD
Food Program Officer	(G)	GM-0120	14	01/31/91	91-31	WRO
Statistician (General)	(A-LCA)	GS-1530	11/12	02/11/91	91-32	PAD
Program Analyst	(A)	GS-0345	11/12/13	02/04/91	91-33	OAE
Food Program Officer	(G)	GM-0120	15	02/19/91	91-34	MARO
Food Program Specialist	(FNS-HQ)	GS-0120	11/12	02/04/91	91-35	CND
Food Program Specialist	(A-LCA)	GS-0120	11/12	02/04/91	91-35 A	CND
Secretary Typing	(A-LCA)	GS-0318	5/6	02/04/91	91-36	PED
Secretary Typing	(A-LCA)	GS-0318	7	02/04/91	91-37	PED
Home Economist or Nutritionist	(A)	GS-0493/ GS-0630	12/13	02/08/91	91-H-08	HNIS
Nutritionist	HNIS-Wide	GS-0630	13	02/05/91	91-H-10***	HNIS
Management Analyst	(A)	GS-0343	9/11	02/12/91	91-26**	IRMD
Math. Statistician	(A)	GS-1529	13	02/04/91	91-28	PAD
Secretary Typing	(A-LCA)	GS-0318	5/6	02/12/91	91-38	PED
Secretary Typing	(A-LCA)	GS-0318	6	02/19/91	91-39	FDD
Food Program Specialist	(FNS-HQ)	GS-0120	9/11	02/19/91	91-40	FDD
Food Program Specialist	(A-LCA)	GS-0120	9/11	02/19/91	91-40 A	FDD

AREA OF CONSIDERATION

- (A) - All Sources
- (A-LCA) - All Sources, Local Commuting Area
- (FNS-HQ) - FNS Headquarters Wide
- (G) - Governmentwide
- (HNIS-Wide) - Human Nutrition Info. Service Wide

* Extends closing date.

** Reannounced & extended area of consideration.

*** Amend closing date.

OFFICE LOCATION

- CND - Child Nutrition Division
- HNIS - Human Nutrition Info. Service
- PAD - Program Accountability Division
- WRO - Western Regional Office
- IRMD - Info. Resources Management Division
- FDD - Food Distribution Division
- OAE - Office of Analysis and Evaluation
- MARO - Mid-Atlantic Regional Office
- PED - Personnel Division
- SWRO - Southwest Regional Office

NOTICE...The Ag Republicans are sponsoring a Book Drive to collect books for troops in Operation Desert Storm. Paperback books and magazines are needed. Bring books to Lisa Yue, Rm. 805, POC, through February 8th. THANK YOU!!!

Darlene L. Barnes, Editor
and Desktop Design
Pamela D. Faith, HQs Photography

The Friday Letter is published every two weeks by the Public Information Staff of the Food and Nutrition Service. To update your mailing address or to alter the number of copies you receive, please mail your changes to FNS Public Information Staff, 3101 Park Center Drive, Room 819, Alexandria, Virginia 22302. Telephone: 703/756-3286

Upcoming Events

January

- 29 - POC Toastmasters, 12-1, 4th flr. conf. rm.
- 29-2/2 - FPA Funds Officers Mtg., New Orleans, LA
- 23-25 - WRO Child Nutrition Directors' Mtg.
- 31 - Blood Test for Cholesterol, 8-12, 4th flr. conf. rm.

February

- 4-8 - RO QC Supervisors/Statisticians Mtg., at HQs
- 5 - POC Toastmasters, 12-1, 4th flr. conf. rm.
- 5-7 - Senior Managers Mtg., at HQs
- 14 - Don't Forget Your Sweetheart...Happy Valentine's Day
- 13-15 - Task Force on Payroll Projections, at HQs